

We claim:

1. An auto-routing electronic mail (e-mail) system, comprising:
a computer network;
a server communicating over said computer network and including an undelivered data storage; and
a sender computer communicating over said computer network;
wherein said electronic mail system compares a received e-mail message to previous e-mail messages sent from said sender computer and if a match occurs said e-mail system determines that said received e-mail message is a bounced e-mail message, and wherein said e-mail system posts at least a portion of said bounced e-mail message to said undelivered data storage in said server and sends a notification e-mail message to an intended recipient of said bounced e-mail message, notifying said intended recipient of the existence of said bounced e-mail message and instructing said intended recipient as to how to retrieve said bounced e-mail message.
2. The system of claim 1, wherein said computer network further comprises a plurality of inter-connected computer networks.
3. The system of claim 1, wherein said notification e-mail includes a server retrieval address comprising a hypertext markup language (HTML) address link identifying the location of said bounced e-mail message in said undelivered data storage.

4. The system of claim 1, wherein said notification e-mail includes a server retrieval address comprising a uniform resource locator (URL) address identifying the location of said bounced e-mail message in said undelivered data storage.

5. The system of claim 1, said sender computer further comprising:
a sent message storage storing previously sent e-mail messages;
a received message storage storing received e-mail messages;
a server retrieval address storage storing a server retrieval address of at least a portion of a bounced e-mail message posted to said server; and
a comparison rule that governs how a bounce is detected;
wherein said sender computer compares a received message to said previously sent e-mail messages according to said comparison rule, determines whether said received message was bounced, posts said at least a portion of said bounced e-mail message to said server, and sends said notification e-mail message to said intended recipient.

6. The system of claim 5, wherein said sender computer receives a server retrieval address from said server after said at least a portion of said bounced e-mail message is posted to said server, with said server retrieval address being included in said notification e-mail message.

7. The system of claim 1, said server further comprising:

a sent message storage storing previously sent e-mail messages;

a received message storage storing received e-mail messages; and

a comparison rule that governs how a bounce is detected;

wherein said server compares a received message to said previously sent messages according to said comparison rule, determines whether said received message was bounced, and sends said notification e-mail message to said intended recipient.

8. The system of claim 7, wherein said server transmits a server retrieval address to said intended recipient after a message bounce is detected, with said server retrieval address being included in said notification e-mail message.

9. An auto-routing method for an electronic mail (e-mail) system, comprising the steps of:

- determining if a received e-mail message is a bounced e-mail message;
- posting at least a portion of said bounced e-mail message to a server accessible to an intended recipient of said bounced e-mail message; and
- notifying said intended recipient of an availability of said at least a portion of said bounced e-mail message on said server;

wherein said intended recipient accesses said server in order to obtain said at least a portion of said bounced e-mail message.

10. The method of claim 9, wherein said server performs the determining and notifying steps.

11. The method of claim 9, further comprising the preliminary steps of:

- said sender computer transmitting a generated e-mail message to said data server; and
- said data server relaying said generated e-mail message to said intended recipient;

wherein said server performs the determining and notifying steps.

12. The method of claim 9, wherein a sender computer performs the determining and notifying steps.

13. The method of claim 9, the notifying step further comprising sending a notification e-mail message to said intended recipient.

14. The method of claim 9, the notifying step further comprising embedding an HTML address link in a notification e-mail message.

15. The method of claim 9, the notifying step further comprising embedding a URL address in a notification e-mail message.

16. The method of claim 9, the determining step further comprising the steps of:

embedding a unique identifier in each outgoing e-mail message;
comparing a previously sent message unique identifier to a received message unique identifier; and
determining that said previously sent message was bounced if a match is found.

17. The method of claim 9, the determining step further comprising the steps of:

comparing at least a portion of said previously sent message to a corresponding portion of a received e-mail message; and
determining that said previously sent message was bounced if a match is found.

18. The method of claim 9, the determining step further comprising the steps of:

maintaining a queue of outgoing messages with each message in said queue being stored for a predetermined time period;

comparing at least a portion of said previously sent message to a corresponding portion of a received e-mail message; and

determining that said previously sent message was bounced if a match is found.

19. The method of claim 9, the determining step further comprising the steps of:

comparing one or more predetermined data fields in said previously sent message to one or more corresponding data fields in a received e-mail message; and

determining that said previously sent message was bounced if a match is found.